

Silent Hell

by Bimo

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Summary: Giles tries to cope with the traumatic events of "Becoming Pt II"

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>volunteer as a beta :-)

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>
The splinters had been removed two days ago, but nevertheless, Giles'

>fingers still felt oddly stiff, weaker than usual. Stretching them up and
down carefully, he was half-terrified and half-amazed by the incredible ease

>with which Angelus had broken them. Just like dry branches in autumn.

>He swallowed, tried to re-concentrate on the copy of an ancient Egyptian
spell in lying front of him on the table. It was a humble attempt to do at

>least something for Buffy. She was out there all on her own. Without her
Watcher to guide her and her friends to support her, the slayer would need

>all the assistance and protection she could get. Even if it only consisted
in the conjuring of blessing spirits to guard her path wherever she went.

>
Giles sucked the dry library air into his lungs, inhaled the unique smell of

>old paper and leather. Familiar, real, soothing. Exhausted, he continued to
read until his vision blurred and words and lines in front of his eyes

>melted into a viscous, unintelligible mush of black spots and dancing
letters. Finally he stopped, took his glasses off and started to polish them

>with a handkerchief from his pocket. He had never realized how often he
actually did that, till Buffy had once pointed it out to him.

>
Still the elegant metal frame of the new glasses felt a bit unfamiliar,
>since it was much lighter than the old one. Well, it also had been twice as
expensive. An unnecessary luxury as Xander had found his old ones lying on
>the floor of Angelus' mansion. Just slightly damaged, but otherwise
completely intact, almost a small miracle.

>
According to the optician it would have been easy to fix them, such a small
>job that he didn't even want Giles to pay for the repair. The poor man
probably still wondered, why, out of a sudden urge, Giles had so vehemently
>insisted on buying a new pair. One that had absolutely nothing in common
with his old.
>
How could he have possibly explained the reasons? The fact that he couldn't
>even look into a mirror wearing these dammed glasses on his nose, without
also seeing Angelus. Angelus who beaten them right out of his face and given
>them back to him. Just as he pleased. Knowing that in the twilight of the
room Giles would be practically blind without them, unable to recognize any
>more than just a few vague shadows. A small but effective trick to intensify
his fear and helplessness.
>
Some of Angelus' blows had been so hard that Giles believed they had smashed
>his eardrum. Of course they hadn't. Buffy's faithful watcher was too
precious a toy to be destroyed that fast. Angelus knew it. Giles knew it.
>And this was exactly where the true insidiousness of these actions lay.

>His hands still trembled when he remembered those hours, bound to a chair,
the fibers of his body numb and aching until Angelus had found a new way to
>make them explode in a concert of glowing pain. The vampire had told him the
truth when he had said he knew how break people. That it was something,
>which had be done with care. Slowly, step for step. First the body, then the
mind.
>
Even now, weeks after the actual events, Giles was still fighting the
>after-effects. Anxiety, spontaneous attacks of panic, nightmares, insomnia.
Almost the whole range of the classical symptoms he once had learned, since
>basic psychological knowledge had been part of his Watcher training. It just
felt so utterly strange to diagnose them on himself and not on a newly
>called Slayer after the killing of her first vampire or on the poor, abused
victim of some obscure demonic cult. Watchers were not allowed to possess
>any weaknesses, were supposed to lead the Slayer from a safe distance. And
what had he done? Letting himself get captured and tortured. Had given away
>the Acathla's secret for an insane delusion, one single moment with his
beloved Jenny. *Drusilla*
>
His lips curled in a faint smile, bitter and cold as the cup of untouched
>tea, standing in front of him on his desk. How ironic, that the

crucial idea
had, of all people, come from Spike. Spike, the great, inscrutable mystery
>of this night's events. At the end he had been in the room for most of the
>time, cynically commenting on Angelus' actions, watching over him.
>Intervening whenever he had come close to inflicting any kind of
>permanent damage like the chainsaw, or the moments when Angelus had mused
>about not only crushing the bones of Giles' fingers but also those of his
>spine.
><But maybe Spike was just the more profound sadist. The one who had
>instinctively understood how to make use of Drusilla's supernatural powers,
>since the true cruelty of what Drusilla had done to him did not reveal in
>daylight. Only at night, when in the daze between awareness and dream there
>wasn't any room left for rational thought.
><The hours between midnight and half past four in the morning were the time
>of the subconscious The time when he was the one who should have guessed
>Angelus' plans right from the start. When he was merely a selfish idiot, who
>had been fooled by Drusilla's deceit, not because he did not have any other
>choice but because he had *wanted* it.
><How terribly easy it had been to succumb to her whisper, to see not her, but
>Jenny. Alive, mysterious and vibrating with radiant beauty. His saving
>angel. She had bent down to him, smiled at him. Promised that everything
>would be fine. That they would finally be together and would share all the
>things they never got to have. How often he had longed to be with her, just
>for one more time, to feel her closeness, the soft, warm touch of her skin.
>By god, how he had wanted to believe in that illusion. For a few precious
>moments there had been no pain, no fear, just the two of them. His shock as
>the veil of magic lifted had been all the more devastating. He, the
>experienced Watcher, had willingly given away the key to the world's
>destruction and only the unbelievable courage of a bunch of kids had saved
>it. Giles did not even dare to imagine what would have happened without
>them.
>Once he gave in to the black whirlpool of "what ifs" and "could have beens",
>his path would lead straight into the rubber room. He knew that because he
>already had come close to this point during all the countless nights when
>he had been lying on his couch, rocking back and forth. His mind spinning
>around Angelus and Drusilla. Frantic and desperate like a hamster in a
>running wheel.
><It was not until recently that these acute attacks of panic had finally
>begun to cease. Three of four times he had even managed to sleep though.
>Maybe just a couple of nights and he would be able to muster enough courage
>to sleep in his bed, even though the bedroom was still filled with the
>stirred up memories of Jenny. Sometimes, when he went up the stairs too

>unprepared, he could see her corpse, carefully displayed between the
pillows
like a precious gift. An image that would possibly keep
haunting him
>forever. But he would have to learn to live with it. For Buffy, for
the
children. Somehow.
>

> <p><p>

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file.